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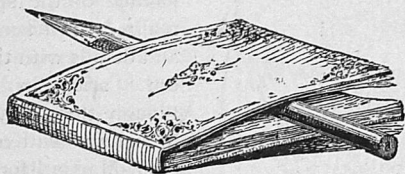
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anatomy will demonstrate that no life is possible in a being of such construction. The idea of liberty, so dear to us, is here represented by a figure seated; her head turned toward her right shoulder, a movement which naturally ought to bring her chin nearly over that shoulder; but, on the contrary, by an inexplicable fancy of the artist (?) her head remains entirely over her left shoulder. As to her limbs, they are if possible, still more extraordinary; they are without any kind of modelling, and the left arm, curiously bent, is hanging to the 'wand' that the Latins called the Rudis or Vindicta, and a little object which must be intended for the cap of liberty. But the most astonishing part of the anatomy of the goddess is certainly her right leg, which, instead of being attached to the hip of the imaginary being, is simply fixed to her dress; so that, when our goddess will take off her dress, supposing that goddesses do so, she is sure to take off her leg at the same time. Our bank-notes are like our new dollar, namely, a work of bad art minutely executed; and as to our stamps they are also very poor. The three-cent and the one-cent stamps have, in the outlines of the portraits of Washington and Franklin, some of the fine lines to be found on the marble busts of these two illustrious great men which were the work of the sculptor Houdon, the modelling of the rest of the heads of those stamps is bad, and as for the other stamps, the portraits are simply shocking works—take the two-cent stamp as an example."

To remedy this evil Mr. Feuardent suggests a resort to the plan adopted by the French Government—the issuance of a general invitation to every one with artistic ideas to send in postage stamp designs. In France the drawings received were submitted to a jury of artists, and the best was selected, purchased, and adopted by the government. The suggestion is good and the plan proposed is well worth a trial.



My Note Book.



PASTEL bids fair to supersede crayon drawing or portraits, and if it is well done it is certainly preferable to most of what passes for crayon portraiture nowadays. The truth is that very few of the so-called crayon portraits are anything better than retouched photographs, and most of them are done by draughtsmen who have no claim whatever to the name of artist. Generally, the crayon work is done over the silver print, which is just distinct enough to be used as a guide. There are, of course, good pastel painters and bad ones, and unfortunately we have very few of the former; but good or bad, there can be no deception about a pastel portrait. It has to stand on its merits. You cannot touch up a silver print and call it a pastel drawing; for, in the first place, the paper you work on must be rough, while that of the silver print must be smooth; and even if you could draw with pastel over a silver print, the latter would be obliterated with the first covering of color.

PROBABLY the best professional pastel portrait "painters"—if one may use the latter word in reference to working in dry color—in New York, are Gambier, Nehlig, Martinez, and a Greek whose name I do not remember, who has made some good portraits for Sarony. To these I must add the name of a lady, Mlle. Emily Potin, a specimen of whose work is on view in a show-case in Union Square, and is equal, perhaps, to that of the best of them. Her style of execution is capital, the pastels are put on with firm touches, and there is none of that after-rubbing which gives the objectionable waxy appearance so common in the work

of amateurs. To smooth the colors of a pastel-drawing is like rubbing the bloom off a peach.

It would not be surprising if there should be quite a revival in this old art. It has many points to make it popular. It is easy for amateurs to (try to) do. A colored portrait is particularly attractive to the ordinary eye, and the meretricious prettiness of even the poorest attempts will often save them from condemnation. That pictures done in pastel are permanent may be judged from the perfect preservation in the Louvre of the portraits by such masters as Latour, Chardin, Rosalba, and Perronneau, who were all of the time of Louis XV.

IN a recent number of the "Revue des Arts Decoratifs"—the able organ of the "Musée des Arts Decoratifs," just introduced into this country by Mr. J. W. Bouton—is an article on Decorative Painting, by P. V. Galland, an eminent architect and painter of Paris, whose name should be well known in New York, for his work is to be seen in the houses of some of our wealthiest men. In Mr. Matthews's Fifth Avenue mansion he is represented by eight decorative panels painted on canvas, representing the Seasons and the Elements; and he is now engaged in painting for the Vanderbilt palace four large coverings. Indeed, he has been frequently employed by Marcotte and Herter.

THE interest in decorative art may be said to be pretty widely diffused when it reaches "The Land of the White Elephant." A friend showed me the other day a copy of a Siamese journal, published in Bangkok, containing a column of extracts from THE ART AMATEUR, duly credited.

ONE of the finest private collections of porcelain in the world—and of Oriental ware, probably the finest—was that of M. Paul Gagnault, late Secretary of the Musée des Arts Decoratifs. I see in an article in the "Revue des Arts Decoratifs" that this collection, which consists of upward of 2000 pieces, has been bought by M. Adrien Dubouché, the millionaire connoisseur, who founded and made, in fact, the Musée de Limoges, the rival of the Musée de Sèvres, and he has presented it to his lucky protégé, for which he seems alone to live.

A SERIES of character sketches from Charles Dickens's works is being produced in parts by Messrs. Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., from fac-similes of original drawings by Mr. Frederick Barnard. The first portfolio lies before me. It contains the portraits of Alfred Jingle, Mrs. Gamp, Bill Sikes, Sidney Carton, Little Dorrit, and Pickwick. It is not easy to get accustomed to new types of such old friends, and although the originals of the half dozen characters at which Mr. Barnard has tried his invention were the work of no less than five different artists, they have a certain individuality, and one is inclined to believe that any modification of their characteristics, however desirable it may seem to the delineator, is not good, since the great novelist himself put the seal of approbation on the original portraits by adopting them.

It is more than probable, however, that Dickens himself was not always satisfied with the pencilled translation of his pen-and-ink, or he would scarcely have changed his artists as frequently as he did. In one notable case, the suicide of the artist intervened. I refer to Robert Seymour, who began the illustration of Pickwick, creating the portraits of that illustrious philosopher and Tupman, Winkle, and Snodgrass, his disciples. Hablot K. Browne, better known as "Phiz," concluded the illustration of the book, and exclusively illustrated "Nicholas Nickleby," "Martin Chuzzlewit," "Dombey and Son," "David Copperfield," "Bleak House," and "Little Dorrit." George Cruikshank illustrated the "Sketches by 'Boz,'" "Oliver Twist," and "Grimaldi." Marcus Stone illustrated "Great Expectations," "A Tale of Two Cities," "Pictures from Italy," and "American Notes." J. Walker illustrated "Hard Times" and "Reprinted Pieces." Hablot K. Browne and George Cattermole were the artists of "Barnaby Rudge" and "The Old Curiosity Shop" (Daniel Maclise contributing the sketch of Little Nell and the Sexton). John Leech, Daniel Maclise, Clarkson Stanfield, and Sir Edwin Landseer illustrated the "Christmas Carol" and four other stories of that series.

and S. L. Fildes was the artist of Dickens's unfinished "Mystery of Edwin Drood."

BUT I have wandered from my subject. To return to the drawings by Mr. Barnard. Of the six, I prefer Mrs. Gamp and Bill Sikes. The former is excellent and does not differ materially from the portrait by "Phiz." The latter comes much nearer Dickens's description of the burglar than does the original by Cruikshank, although Mr. Barnard, in the accessories of his picture, has, without apparent cause, departed somewhat from the author's description. His Sidney Carton is more satisfactory than the colorless portrait by Marcus Stone. But his Pickwick is a failure. One cannot accept the flabby, expressionless face he has given us for the beaming, benevolent old philosopher so dear to us all.

PROBABLY there has never been a time when so much trash has been produced upon the American stage as at present. It is absurd for the critics to attempt to analyze it. The best course to pursue probably is that adopted by Mr. Laffan, the artist, critic, railroad manager, and capitalist, who writes for The New York Sun. Instead of attempting an elaborate critique of Miss Fanny Davenport's performance of "An American Girl," he wrote an appreciative notice of her dresses and personal charms; and, after the same fashion, devoted his notice of "Our First Families" principally to the interior decorations of Daly's theatre, and the new embroidered drop-curtain, which has replaced the hideous daub that formerly concealed the stage.

ONE of the best "sets" ever seen in New York is that in the second act of "Lawn Tennis," at the Park Theatre. It represents an interior cleverly burlesquing the extravagant limits to which household decoration and bric-à-brac collecting are carried by some people. When the curtain was rung up, for a moment I thought that the decorators from the fashionable firm of P— & S— had been at work on the stage, and, to tell the truth, I am not quite sure now that they did not have a hand in it. Among the bric-à-brac displayed about the apartment were ash-barrels and packing-cases gorgeously decorated, and in place of a trophy of arms over the mantel-piece was a collection of domestic utensils, including a wash-board and pail and a dust-pan, all painted in unique style, and flanked by crossed brooms, with highly-ornamented handles.

SOME of the costumes of the performers were very amusing, but the best of them were a direct steal from Punch. There was, for instance, Mr. Sambourne's young lady in the full evening dress suit of the gentleman of to-day, except a black skirt, looped to show stockings of the same hue (neatly set off with buckled shoes), in place of the masculine inartistic pantaloons. Another actor was dressed after Du Maurier's design of a full evening dress suit of white, instead of black, but with black shirt, collars, and cuffs; and another wore the conventional dress suit of black, with the difference that the coat was made with Du Maurier's patented short sleeves, contrived to display to advantage man's shapely arms—when he has them.

A NEW YORK "artist," whose "studio" is in Fourth Street, has issued a circular headed: "Blackened or bruised eyes made natural instantaneously." Then follow two illustrations showing a pair of eyes "before" and "after" treatment. The circular concludes with a special appeal for the patronage of the fair sex, who are told that they are not required to visit the "studio," but "may send for the artist," who, in the privacy of their own apartments, will be pleased to give them the benefit of his professional skill.

THERE is much in the force of habit. The photographic operator, we all know, has a way of turning his back to the light when he finally takes the cap from the lens, the purpose being not to distract the attention of the sitter. Mr. Feuardent carried his stone statuette of "Hope" to Sarony's the other day to have it photographed. As soon as the cap was off, the operator gravely turned on his heel, as usual, and so remained until the picture was taken. If anything could "make a graven image smile," I should think it would be such a performance.

MONTEZUMA.